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BOREN: CASEY'S DEPARTURES SHOULD IMPROVE CIA/CONGRESS RELATIONS
BY CLIFF HAAS

The chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee says he expects better relations between Congress and the CIA now that William J. Casey, "an old crony" of President Reagan, has resigned as director.

P. Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., made his comments in an interview with The Associated Press Thursday as Reagan administration officials, struggling to repair the damage from the Iran-Contra affair, renewed appeals to Congress to continue financing the Nicaraguan rebels.

A move is under way to cut off funds already appropriated in the wake of disclosure of the diversion to the Contras of proceeds from the sale of arms to Iran.

A. Boren said Casey's designated successor, career CIA officer Robert M. Gates, unlike Casey, "won't be an old crony ... a longtime political associate" of the president, and "maybe that is good." Casey was "in a squeeze," he said. "I think he tried to keep the agency out of trouble, out of political involvement. Even if it turned out that Mr. Casey knew more than we now know about the Iranian business, I would imagine that he tried to keep the agency out of it as much as possible, because he really tried to separate himself as friend, confidant, political adviser to the president, and being CIA director. I think he had a very strong institutional loyalty and tried to protect (the CIA).

"I think it is better if you have a director who is not put into that position, who is not going to have to play a dual role of being personal confidant and political adviser (to the president) and director of the CIA. "On another matter, Boren said he could not fully endorse legislation proposed by Rep. Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, the House Intelligence Committee chairman, which would strip the executive branch of all discretion on the question of when to notify Congress of covert acts.

Prompted by the administration's 10-month delay in telling Congress about arms sales to Iran, Stokes introduced legislation that would require prior written notice to both the House and Senate Intelligence committees of any planned covert action. Stokes would allow a 48-hour delay in notification in exceptional cases.

A 1980 law requiring timely notification of Congress of any covert action was left deliberately vague on the subject of reporting deadlines to avoid a constitutional confrontation over the president's right to withhold notice.

"We need to define what we mean by timely," said Boren. But "you can have a thousand pages of rules, and people will still find a way to get around them if they want to." "The rules are very clear," said Boren. "They should have told us about things. But they didn't tell us." The administration has justified its delayed notification to legislators about the arms sale to Iran on the basis of a document Reagan signed on Jan. 17, 1986, authorizing Casey to keep the operation secret from the intelligence committees.

In other developments:

Presidential spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said the White House would deliver today eight boxes of documents requested by the Senate committee investigating the Iran-Contra affair. It is the first shipment to the panel, although several boxes were turned over to the House committee last week, Fitzwater said.

Asked what was in the boxes, Fitzwater said, "It's all kinds of things, memos, notes ... The operating rule is more, not less." Fitzwater said Thursday the president's second meeting with the Tower commission reviewing National Security Council operations will be held Wednesday afternoon. Fitzwater said the panel, headed by former Sen. John Tower, R-Texas, would be provided excerpts of notes Reagan made about the Iran affair. Reagan first appeared before the panel on Jan. 26, and the commission's report is due Feb. 19.

Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, after visiting with Reagan at the White House, said he believes the United States has to have some kind of relationship with Iran because of that country's importance in the Middle East. A senior administration official said Reagan replied that he was aware of Iran's importance and "had made his effort." The president of Southern Air Transport used about \$1 million from a Panamanian bank account to buy two cargo planes to help supply Nicaraguan rebels, two Canadian aircraft dealers who sold the planes told The Philadelphia Inquirer. The sale of the two DHC-4 Caribous indicates the Miami-based carrier, formerly owned by the CIA, and its president, William G. Langton, played a larger role in supplying the Contra rebels than had previously been known, the newspaper reported in today's editions.

On another matter, Boren said he would not favor a full-scale investigation of CIA activities, such as those conducted by the late Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, in the mid-1970s.

"I don't think that would be good," he said, citing a need to continue to rebuild an intelligence community decimated by the budget cuts which accompanied the investigation directed by Church.

Elsewhere on Capitol Hill on Thursday, Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Nicaragua's Contra rebels can achieve a political victory against the leftist Sandinista government in Managua if military aid from the United States continues.

Abrams' testimony came as the committee began weighing legislation which would cut off all U.S. aid to the Contras while also blocking \$40 million in assistance which already has been approved. It took no action before Congress left town for a long recess.

Abrams, the top State Department official for inter-American affairs, also said that diplomatic efforts alone will not be enough to force the Sandinistas to accept democratic change.

Philip C. Habib, special envoy to Central America, agreed with Abrams, saying that so far, the effort to negotiate a peaceful settlement has been blocked by the Sandinistas.

"The Sandinistas are committed Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries who will only negotiate in earnest when under pressure," Habib said.

Under questioning by senators, Abrams reiterated that it is not U.S. policy to seek an outright military victory in which "Contra tanks would roll into Managua." "Outright military victory has never been part of U.S. policy," Abrams said. Rather, he said, the United States seeks a "political victory" that is driven by military pressure.